Assessment Guide

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This Assessment Guide provides information for when you work on your TMAs for M140. Before starting your TMAs, you should also read the Student guidance for preparing and submitting TMAs document on the 'Assessment' tab.

Preparing your TMAs

The TMAs provide an opportunity for your tutor to give you feedback as well as marks. Therefore, if you are unable to complete all the questions in the TMAs, it is still worth sending incomplete answers so that you can receive feedback. When working on your TMAs, you should do the following to get the maximum from your tutor's feedback.

- Show your workings. Good communication is an important skill and this demonstrates that you understand the concepts; tutors will need to see this to give you feedback on this aspect.
- Don't just paste in computer output; you should use the relevant part in your answer with an interpretation.
- Keep your answers brief.

Guidance on how to answer TMA questions is given in Subsection 7.2 of Unit 1.

Including Minitab output in your TMA

Handwritten TMAs are perfectly acceptable on M140. The output from Minitab can be printed and the relevant part cut out and stuck in by hand. Even if you have typed your TMA, it is still acceptable to cut and stick the relevant bits of computer output rather than trying to embed them into your document. However, all output should be included at the point it occurs in your answer and not put into an appendix.

Plagiarism and copyright

Important information on plagiarism and copyright is on the 'Assessment' area page of the M140 website. You should make sure that you read this before starting your TMAs. In particular, you should familiarise yourself with the advice on the Developing good academic practices website.

The work that you submit must be your own and not copied from or provided by others. You may discuss approaches to assignment questions with fellow students but you must complete the assignment yourself and not submit a joint effort. In particular, you are reminded that posting TMA questions on the internet is a breach of OU copyright, and copying TMA answers from the internet is plagiarism. The University considers plagiarism to be a serious matter: please read the appendix on plagiarism in the Assessment Handbook, which can also be accessed via your StudentHome page. (References to 'assignments' include tutor-marked assignments (TMAs) and computer-marked assignments (iCMAs).)

Submitting your TMAs

You should send your answers to TMA questions *either* to your tutor by post (they will let you know their address) *or* electronically using the University's online TMA/EMA service. Please read the Student guidance for preparing and submitting TMAs document for details on how to submit your TMAs.

Late submission and special circumstances

The study planner on the M140 website specifies the cut-off date by which your tutor should receive your TMA. In exceptional circumstances your tutor may agree to a late submission. Note that if you need to request late submission:

- You must explain your reasons to your tutor *before* the cut-off date.
- Your tutor must be satisfied that your reasons are both appropriate and genuine.
- Your tutor will normally only authorise an extension of up to 7 days.
- Your tutor is not allowed to give an extension of more than 21 days under any circumstances; an extension of more than 21 days can be authorised only by your Student Support Team.
- Permission to submit a TMA more than 7 days after the cut-off date will not normally be granted for more than one TMA on M140.

If for some reason you are unable to submit a TMA or iCMA or have to submit an assignment that is incomplete or well below your usual standard, you should consider reporting the circumstances to the University. The M140 Examination and Assessment Board can bear these in mind when determining your final result.

Details concerning the submission of special circumstances information are given in the Assessment Handbook (available via your StudentHome page).

Your marked TMAs

All the TMAs count towards your final module result and are designed to be part of the learning experience of this module. Your tutor not only grades your TMA but provides you with feedback and advice on how to improve your performance for future TMAs and the EMA. Try the following to gain the most from your tutor's feedback.

- When you receive your overall grade you may feel many emotions: pleased, disappointed, surprised. None of these feelings are wrong, although they may affect your learning. Therefore, put your marked assignment to one side until you have time to go through it in detail.
- In your next study session, read through the PT3 form to check the main points made by your tutor. Then read through the answers you gave and your tutor's suggestions. Even if your answer is correct, your tutor may have made comments on how you could improve the style or content of your answer.
- Make a note of anything that puzzles you and bring these notes with the TMA to the next tutorial. If you do not have a tutorial for a long time, or cannot attend, then phone or email your tutor – although remember they may not be able to immediately access your script.

- On a separate piece of paper, write down two main points: these could be pieces of advice, mistakes that you made or things to note. You should bear these points in mind when you write your next TMA and your final EMA.

(Adapted from: Coats, M (1991) *Open Teaching Toolkit, Learning How to Learn*, Open University Press)

TMA marks

TMA 01, TMA 02 and TMA 04 are marked out of 50, however the mark returned to you by the University will actually be out of 100 (i.e. twice the total of the marks on your TMA script). TMA 03, on the other hand, is marked out of 100.

Only TMA 01 and TMA 02 are substitutable (along with iCMAs 41–43). See the M140 Guide for more details.

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